

Applicants urge that this is a hindsight reconstruction of this invention. Brown gives no indication or suggestion that its step of re-heating the neck region can be dispensed with. From paragraphs [0042] to [0046] it seems the re-heating conditions used in Brown's process are critical, e.g., achieving the correct temperature ranges relative to the glass transition temperature. This emphasis on the detail of the process clearly implies that it is well researched and essential. In the present claimed process, the second re-heating step of Brown is eliminated by the expedient of transferring the freshly moulded toothbrush skeleton with its splayed sections from the injection mould in which it is made in a hot malleable state. This avoids the complexity of a second re-heating step and the extra energy requirement of doing the re-heating. The present claimed process therefore offers considerable simplification and advantage, and consequently cannot be obvious over Brown. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 40-42 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over Brown in view of U.S. Patent 6,108,852, issued August 29, 2000, to Vrignaud ("Vrignaud"). In particular, the Action alleges that it would have been obvious to consider injecting a second material as used in Vrignaud in the method of Brown for the purpose of holding the sections in a desired position. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 40-42 relate to the injection of a second fluid material into the vicinity of the sections. Brown is distinguished above. Vrignaud discloses a process for making a toothbrush in which a toothbrush handle and two side brushes 14 and 15 are made separately. The two side handles are attached to the toothbrush handle by placing them side-by-side and overmolding the handle and side brushes with a soft rubber-like material (see, col. 2, lines 52-59).

This too is a hindsight reconstruction of this invention. Brown makes a toothbrush in which the handle and sections are moulded integrally. Brown gives no indication that its process is inadequate in securing the head sections into any desired position. Certainly when the plastics materials referred to in Brown for example [0045] are below their glass transition temperature they would be rigid enough to stay in place and this appears to be achieved in Brown. Vrignaud addresses a completely different problem, of attaching together previously disconnected side brushes and a handle, using overmolding.

Both Brown and Vrignaud clearly provide satisfactory independent and alternative solutions to the problem of providing a robust toothbrush. There is absolutely no motivation for the skilled reader of Brown to apply an overmolding as provided by Vrignaud. Similarly,

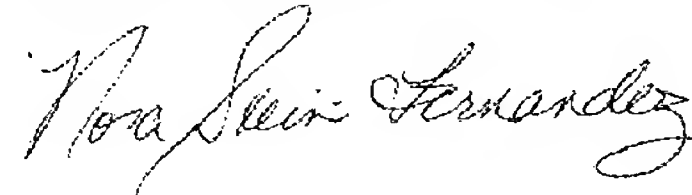
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Vrignaud does not envisage the possibility of injection molding the toothbrush head with the handle and side brushes all in position as in Brown.

Therefore, Applicants assert that any fair reading of Brown, alone or in combination with Vrignaud fails to produce the inventive process. A *prima facie* case has not been established. Favorable reconsideration of the rejection under Section 103(a) is requested.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration of claims 31-47 and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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